

MEMORANDUM

To: Charlotte Planning Commission
Copy: Nate Bareham, Town Administrator; Rebecca Kaplan, Planning & Zoning Assistant
From: Darren Schibler & Kate McCarthy, CCRPC
Date: June 12, 2025
Re: Materials for Planning Commission's June 19, 2025 meeting

Recap: Our Task/Background

As you know, the Charlotte Planning Commission, with CCRPC's assistance, is drafting modest updates to the Land Use Regulations to promote compatible village businesses and housing, community vitality, and safety. Per the grant funding this work, a draft of the updated Land Use Regulations (LURs) is due by 6/30/25. After that, it is up to the community whether and how to move the bylaws to adoption.

May 15th Planning Commission Meeting: What We Discussed and Heard

On May 15th, we spent the first half of the meeting discussing Act 181 – specifically, the draft CCRPC future land use map, housing targets, and potential Tier 1B areas for Charlotte.

- **Future Land Use Map.** The Planning Commission was generally comfortable with the draft map, which reflects the established land use plan for Charlotte.
- **Housing Targets.** Though there was concern about whether the targets were achievable and how Charlotte's progress towards them would be judged, the Commission generally agreed that Charlotte's targets were reasonable considering the regional context.
- **Tier 1B.**
 - We discussed the benefits and potential drawbacks of the Tier 1B exemption from Act 250, acknowledging that it would probably have a limited applicability in Charlotte given local regulations and development possibilities.
 - The Commission was split on whether Tier 1B should apply to all eligible areas, but reached consensus on recommending it for only the Village Commercial District.
 - Note that at their May 27th meeting, the Selectboard received the Commission's recommendation but ultimately decided not to move forward the request. In light of the current charter amendment proposal, the Selectboard agreed that any issues of land use regulation should be put to a public vote.

For the remainder of the meeting, we reviewed the prior draft Land Use Regulations (LURs) and remaining questions to provide clarity for CCRPC to prepare the final draft of the regulations.

- The Commission generally supported the changes to permitted and conditional uses. There were remaining questions about how to handle elderly housing.
- There was agreement to divide the Village Commercial District into two areas, East and West.

- There was agreement to keep current minimum lot sizes in the East Charlotte Village and West Charlotte Village Districts, and to retain the requirement that all subdivisions be PUDs / PRDs.
- The Commission proposed a Mixed Use Density Bonus that would reduce the residential density to:
 - 1 acre per dwelling in the West Village Commercial District
 - 2 acres per dwelling in the East Village Commercial District
- The Commission asked for CCRPC assistance determining the total new housing capacity this bonus would provide.
- There was a question about whether the bonus could create future nonconformities if the business component of the lot / development did not continue.

Goals for June 19th, 2025 – Project Closeout

The changes from discussed at the May 15th meeting have been integrated into a final draft of the LURs which we will review page-by-page at the upcoming meeting. A full summary of changes from the currently effective LURs is included at the end of this memo.

We will also confirm performance of the following project deliverables that have been provided to the Town, which will render CCRPC’s work on the East & West Villages project complete.

- *East and West Villages Outreach and Report (D&K with CCRPC support):* Complete. After extensive community engagement and data collection, D&K delivered the East and West Villages report on October 17, 2024; CCRPC submitted a revision with edits requested by the Planning Commission on February 20, 2025. The report includes graphics to illustrate village development opportunities, as well as illustrative cross-sections for transportation safety improvements in the villages.
- *Land Use Regulation Updates (CCRPC):* Complete. On June 19, 2025, CCRPC delivered draft changes to Charlotte’s Land Use Regulations in an effort to remove impediments to more dense, affordable, and diverse types of housing development in the two village centers under the requirements of the Bylaw Modernization Grant program.
- *Outreach Campaign (CCRPC):* Throughout the project, D&K and CCRPC worked with town staff and the Planning Commission on educational materials, published widely on Front Porch Forum and on the town website, to ensure public awareness and understanding of the East West Villages project and LUR updates.

Finally, we will discuss next steps to could take to bring the proposed LURs to the public, along with future planning work the Town could undertake. We look forward to seeing you next week.

Best,



Darren Schibler
Senior Planner, CFM



Kate McCarthy
Senior Planner, AICP

Summary of Proposed Changes to the Charlotte LURs

Section	Page	Description
Table 2.1(C)-(D)	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WCV District: modified permitted & conditional uses for housing, emergency shelter to reflect statute / building size thresholds
Table 2.2(C)-(D)	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECV District: modified permitted & conditional uses for housing, emergency shelter, and cemetery per statute / building size thresholds.
Table 2.3	10-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separated VCM into East & West Modified permitted / conditional uses per discussions in February & April, including building size thresholds Removed distinction in allowed uses based on which side of Route 7 they are located Added lot size and density specifications for Mixed Use Development (1 acre per unit / no restriction for commercial) – also updated Section 4.12 (Mixed Use) accordingly Clarified apparent error requiring minimum instead of maximum density Changed PUDs / PRDs to be required only for Major Subdivisions and optional for Minor Subdivisions
Table 2.4	12-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as above for West VCM, except lot size and density for Mixed Use Development is 2 acres per residential unit.
Table 2.5	14-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slight modifications to unit size thresholds for permitted and conditional uses to be consistent with Village districts
4.4(F)	46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified that Conditional Use review is not required for all Affordable Housing, only as specified in district tables
4.7(F)	48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified that Conditional Use review is not required for all Day Care Facilities, only as specified in district tables
7.3(B)	87	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified that PUD / PRD review is required only for Major Subdivisions in the Village & Commercial Districts; it is optional for Minor Subdivisions in these districts
8.2(B)-(C)	94-95	
8.4(F)	97	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified the transfer of development rights provisions for PUDs to indicate that the number of units that can be transferred is determined by dimensional standards (density) applicable to the sending area
9.1(A)	102	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed a sentence that could be interpreted to mean that permits are only required for structural improvements in the Flood Hazard Overlay District. This ensures compliance with the NFIP by ensuring permits are also required for mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation, or drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials.
10.2	122	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added a definition of “Emergency Shelter” per 24 V.S.A. § 4303(40)
Throughout	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated references to Village Commercial to include both East & West Updated numbering and references to District Tables due to addition of Table 2.4, East Village Commercial District